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MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

December 12, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: AL HAIG 
SUBJECT: Vietnam Negotiations

President Thieu presented a one hour address before the National Assembly on December 12 which reaffirmed his position regarding the Indochina peace settlement. He repeated standard GVN arguments that:



Thieu repeated his offer to permit a U.N. supervised referendum. He suggested a truce to begin before Christmas and end after New Years, during which U.S. POWs could be released in time for Christmas while the GVN would release all North Vietnamese POWs during the truce. During the truce, all Vietnamese parties, namely the NVN, GVN and NLF, would hold consultations to discuss every problem of mutual concern.



~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY



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By  NARA, Date 9/22/93
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-- We could at least have while a comprehensive settlement is being negotiated, a ceasefire to create favorable disposition and to carry out a simply humanitarian action which is not connected with the military or political questions, namely the release of the prisoners of war of all parties. Had this been carried out the prisoners of war would have had the chance to be repatriated and be reunited with their families before the coming Christmas. For that reason today, less than two weeks before Christmas, and with the good will to restore peace to the people of North and South Vietnam and with the view to create favorable disposition for the negotiations between the Vietnamese parties leading to a peace settlement,

The Government of the Republic of Vietnam puts forward the general ideas as follows:

-- There can be a truce for a considerable duration to begin before Christmas Day and to end after the New Year of 1973, and during which all parties agree to stop all military offensive actions.

-- During the time of this truce two concrete and useful actions can be easily taken. These are:

. First: to release the prisoners of war in order for them to be repatriated on time for Christmas.



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- With regard to the exchange of prisoners of war, on their part, the Government and the people of the Republic of Vietnam still maintain their generous offer which has been made to the Government of the US, namely that the GVN stands ready to contribute its part in solving the problem of the US prisoners of war on the occasion of Christmas by releasing to North Vietnam all the North Vietnamese prisoners of war currently detained in South Vietnam.
- This action by the Government and people of the Republic of Vietnam shows the deep understanding and the gratitude of the people and Government of the Republic of Vietnam towards the people and Government of the United States, as well as the families of the US prisoners of war for their contributions and their great and noble sacrifices in their help to the Republic of Vietnam to fight to preserve its freedom and independence.
- To show its utmost good will, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam will unilaterally release first and without any conditions 1,015 Communist North Vietnamese disabled and healthy prisoners of war on the first day of the truce.

~~SECRET~~GVN Ceasefire Proposal

President Thieu, in an address to the National Assembly on December 12, proposed a ceasefire and a prisoner release before Christmas and consultations among the three Vietnamese parties during the truce.

In what appears to be a last-ditch effort to avoid a settlement that does not include direct GVN/DRV/NLF negotiations, Thieu states that: "There can be a truce for a considerable duration to begin before Christmas Day and to end after the New Year of 1973, and during which all parties agree to stop all military offensive actions."

Obviously trying to appeal to what the GVN perceives as a major issue for the U.S. Government and public, the address focusses on the POW issue. According to Thieu, the truce period would permit the release of the POW's "in order for them to be repatriated on time for Christmas."

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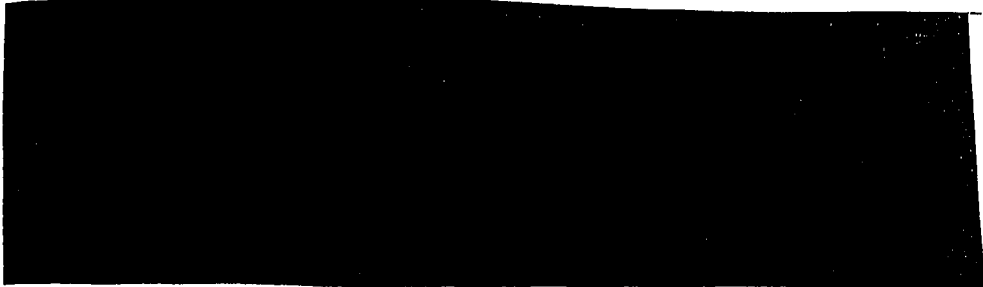
Summary of GVN Ceasefire Proposal

President Thieu in an address to the National Assembly on December 12 proposed ceasefire and prisoner release before Christmas, and consultations among three Vietnamese parties during truce.

The following excerpts of President Thieu's message give the substance of the proposal:



-- The Government of the Republic of Vietnam is not the obstacle to the complete or partial release of prisoners of war; on the contrary, on many occasions it has unilaterally and unconditionally released North Vietnamese prisoners of war, and it has also made many other concrete proposals on the release of the US prisoners of war.



-- The people and Government of the Republic of Vietnam have sought every means and every opportunity to lead to the restoration of peace, from the smallest to the most important problem, from short-term truces to proposals for definitive ceasefire, from unilateral offers to release of prisoners of war to the total exchange of prisoners of war, from holding public talks to private talks with anybody, anywhere and on any subject.

